

301 KAR 2:172. Deer hunting seasons, zones, and requirements.

RELATES TO: KRS 150.010, 150.177, 150.180, 150.411(3), 150.990, 237.110

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 150.025(1), 150.170, 150.175, 150.390(1)

NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 150.025(1) authorizes the department to promulgate administrative regulations to establish open seasons for the taking of wildlife, to regulate bag limits and methods of take, and to make these requirements apply to a limited area. KRS 150.170 authorizes exemptions for certain people from hunting license and permit requirements. KRS 150.175 authorizes the kinds of licenses and permits to be issued by the department. KRS 150.390(1) prohibits the taking of deer in any manner contrary to any provisions of KRS Chapter 150 or Title 301 KAR. This administrative regulation establishes deer hunting seasons and zones, legal methods of taking, and checking and recording requirements for deer hunting.

Section 1. Definitions. (1) "Additional deer permit" means a permit that allows the holder to take up to two (2) additional deer beyond those allowed by the statewide permit in the following combinations:

- (a) One (1) antlered deer and one (1) antlerless deer; or
- (b) Two (2) antlerless deer.
- (2) "Adult" means a person who is at least eighteen (18) years of age.
- (3) "Air gun" means a pneumatic gun fired by a charge of compressed air.
- (4) "Antlered deer" means a male or female deer, excluding male fawns, with a visible antler protruding above the hairline.
- (5) "Antlerless deer" means a male or female deer with no visible antler protruding above the hairline.
- (6) "Archery equipment" means a long bow, recurve bow, or compound bow incapable of holding an arrow at full or partial draw without aid from the archer.
- (7) "Arrow" means the projectile fired from a bow or crossbow.
- (8) "Centerfire" means a type of gun that detonates a cartridge by the firing pin striking a primer in the middle of the end of the cartridge casing.
- (9) "Crossbow" means a bow designed or fitted with a device to hold an arrow at full or partial draw without aid from the archer.
- (10) "Deer" means a member of the species *Odocoileus virginianus*.
- (11) "Firearm" means a breech or muzzle-loading rifle, shotgun, or handgun.
- (12) "License year" means the period from March 1 through the following last day of February.
- (13) "Modern gun" means an air gun, rifle, handgun, or shotgun that is loaded from the rear of the barrel.
- (14) "Muzzle-loading gun" means a rifle, shotgun, or handgun that is loaded from the discharging end of the barrel or discharging end of the cylinder.
- (15) "Statewide deer permit" means a permit, which, in conjunction with appropriate licenses, seasons, and methods, allows the holder to take:
 - (a) One (1) antlered deer and one (1) antlerless deer; or
 - (b) Two (2) antlerless deer.
- (16) "Statewide deer hunting requirements" means the season dates, zone descriptions, bag limits, and other requirements for deer hunting established in this administrative regulation.
- (17) "Youth" means a person under the age of sixteen (16) by the date of the hunt.
- (18) "Zone" means an area consisting of counties designated by the department within

which deer hunting season dates and limits are set for the management and conservation of deer in Kentucky.

Section 2. License and Deer Permit Requirements. (1) Unless exempted by KRS 150.170, a person shall carry proof of purchase of a valid Kentucky hunting license and valid deer permit while hunting.

(2) In lieu of a statewide deer permit or a license or permit that grants statewide deer hunting privileges, a person possessing a valid junior statewide hunting license shall not use more than two (2) junior deer hunting permits.

(3) An additional deer permit shall not be valid unless accompanied by a valid Kentucky hunting license and a statewide deer permit or a license or permit that grants statewide deer hunting privileges.

Section 3. Hunter Restrictions. (1) A deer hunter shall not:

(a) Take a deer except during daylight hours;

(b) Use dogs, except leashed tracking dogs to recover a wounded deer;

(c) Take a deer that is swimming;

(d) From a vehicle, boat, or on horseback, take a deer, except that a hunter with a disabled hunting exemption permit issued by the department may use a stationary vehicle as a hunting platform; and

(e) Possess or use a decoy or call powered by electricity from any source.

(2) A person shall only use the equipment established in paragraphs (a) through (e) of this subsection to take a deer:

(a) A crossbow or archery equipment loaded with a broadhead of seven-eighths (7/8) inch or wider upon expansion;

(b) A firearm:

1. With an action that fires a single round of ammunition upon each manipulation of the trigger; and

2. Loaded with centerfire, single projectile ammunition designed to expand upon impact;

(c) A muzzle-loading gun;

(d) A shotgun loaded with a shell containing single projectile ammunition designed to expand upon impact; or

(e) An air gun:

1. Of .35 caliber or larger;

2. Charged by an external tank; and

3. Loaded with single projectile ammunition designed to expand upon impact.

(3) A person shall only use a weapon that complies with the appropriate season established in Section 5 of this administrative regulation to take a deer.

(4) A crossbow shall contain a working safety device.

(5) A person shall not use a magazine capable of holding more than ten (10) rounds to take a deer.

Section 4. Hunter Orange Clothing Requirements. (1) During the modern gun deer season, muzzle-loader season, and any youth gun season, a person hunting any species during daylight hours and any person accompanying a hunter, shall display solid, unbroken hunter orange visible from all sides on the head, back, and chest except while hunting waterfowl.

(2) During an elk firearm season as established in 301 KAR 2:132, a person hunting any species and any person accompanying a hunter within the elk restoration zone, shall display solid, unbroken hunter orange visible from all sides on the head, back, and chest except while

hunting waterfowl.

(3) The hunter orange portions of a garment worn to fulfill the requirements of this section:

(a) May display a small section of another color; and

(b) Shall not have mesh weave openings exceeding one-fourth (1/4) inch by any measurement.

(4) A camouflage-pattern hunter orange garment worn without additional solid hunter orange on the head, back, and chest shall not meet the requirements of this section.

Section 5. Statewide Season Dates. (1) A deer hunter may use archery equipment to hunt deer statewide from the first Saturday in September through the third Monday in January.

(2) A deer hunter may take deer with a modern gun statewide beginning the second Saturday in November for:

(a) Sixteen (16) consecutive days in Zones 1 and 2; and

(b) Ten (10) consecutive days in Zones 3 and 4.

(3) A deer hunter may use a muzzle-loading gun to hunt deer statewide:

(a) For two (2) consecutive days beginning the third Saturday in October;

(b) For nine (9) consecutive days beginning the second Saturday in December; and

(c) During any season in which a modern gun may be used to take deer.

(4) A deer hunter may use a crossbow to hunt deer statewide:

(a) From October 1 through the end of the third full weekend in October;

(b) From the second Saturday in November through December 31; and

(c) During any season in which a gun may be used to take deer.

(5) A legal resident hunter sixty-five (65) years or older may hunt with a crossbow from the first Saturday in September through the third Monday in January.

(6) Youth gun season. For two (2) consecutive days beginning on the second Saturday in October, a youth deer hunter:

(a) May take antlered or antlerless deer and shall use a legal method to do so; and

(b) Shall comply with this administrative regulation and all other statewide deer hunting requirements.

(7) There shall be a free youth weekend for two (2) consecutive days beginning on the Saturday after Christmas during which a youth:

(a) Shall not be required to have a hunting license or deer permit;

(b) May take antlered or antlerless deer and shall use a legal method to do so; and

(c) Shall comply with this administrative regulation and all other statewide deer hunting requirements.

Section 6. Zones. (1) Zone 1 shall consist of Anderson, Ballard, Boone, Bracken, Bullitt, Caldwell, Calloway, Campbell, Carlisle, Carroll, Christian, Crittenden, Franklin, Fulton, Gallatin, Grant, Graves, Green, Hardin, Harrison, Henry, Hickman, Hopkins, Jefferson, Kenton, Larue, Livingston, Lyon, Marshall, McCracken, Nelson, Oldham, Owen, Pendleton, Robertson, Scott, Shelby, Spencer, Trigg, Trimble, Washington, Webster, and Woodford Counties.

(2) Zone 2 shall consist of Bourbon, Boyd, Carter, Fayette, Fleming, Grayson, Greenup, Hart, Henderson, Jessamine, Lawrence, Lewis, Logan, Marion, Mason, McLean, Mercer, Muhlenberg, Nicholas, Ohio, Todd, and Union Counties.

(3) Zone 3 shall consist of Adair, Allen, Barren, Bath, Boyle, Breckinridge, Butler, Casey, Clark, Cumberland, Daviess, Edmondson, Elliott, Estill, Hancock, Johnson, Lincoln, Madison, Meade, Metcalf, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Powell, Rowan, Simpson, Taylor, Warren, and Wolfe Counties.

(4) Zone 4 shall consist of Bell, Breathitt, Clay, Clinton, Floyd, Garrard, Harlan, Jackson,

Knott, Knox, Laurel, Lee, Leslie, Letcher, Magoffin, Martin, McCreary, Menifee, Owsley, Perry, Pike, Pulaski, Rockcastle, Russell, Wayne, and Whitley Counties.

Section 7. Season and Zone Limits. (1) A person shall not take more than four (4) deer statewide in a license year except:

(a) As authorized in 301 KAR 2:111, 2:176, 2:178, and 3:100; and

(b) A person may take an unlimited number of antlerless deer in Zone 1 if the person has purchased the appropriate additional deer permits.

(2) A person shall not take more than one (1) antlered deer per license year, regardless of the permit type used, except as established in 301 KAR 2:111, 2:178, and 3:100.

(3) In Zone 3, a person may take two (2) deer with a gun.

(4) In Zone 4, a person may take:

(a) Only two (2) deer with a gun; and

(b) Only antlered deer during:

1. Modern gun season;

2. Early muzzleloader season; and

3. The first six (6) days of the December muzzleloader season.

(5) The aggregate bag limit for Zones, 2, 3, and 4 shall be four (4) deer per hunter.

Section 8. Supervision of Youth Gun Deer Hunters. (1) An adult shall:

(a) Accompany a person under sixteen (16) years old; and

(b) Remain in a position to take immediate control of the youth's gun.

(2) An adult accompanying a youth hunter shall not be required to possess a hunting license or deer permit if the adult is not hunting.

Section 9. Harvest Recording. (1) Immediately after taking a deer, and prior to moving the carcass, a person shall record, in writing:

(a) The species taken;

(b) The date taken;

(c) The county where taken; and

(d) The sex of the deer taken on one (1) of the following:

1. The hunter's log section on the reverse side of a license or permit;

2. The hunter's log produced in a hunting guide;

3. A hunter's log printed from the Internet;

4. A hunter's log available from any KDSS agent; or

5. An index or similar card.

(2) The person shall retain and possess the completed hunter's log while the person is in the field during the current hunting season.

Section 10. Checking a Deer. (1) A person shall check a harvested deer before 11:59 p.m. on the day the deer is recovered by:

(a) Calling (800) 245-4263 and providing the requested information; or

(b) Completing the online check-in process at fw.ky.gov.

(2) A person who has checked in a deer shall record the confirmation number on a hunter's log.

(3) If a hunter removes the hide or head of a harvested deer before the deer is checked in, then the hunter shall retain the deer parts established in paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection:

(a) For antlered deer, the:

1. Head with antlers; or
2. Testicles, scrotum, or penis attached to the carcass; or
- (b) For antlerless deer, the:
 1. Head; or
 2. Udder or vulva attached to the carcass.
- (4) If a hunter transfers possession of a harvested deer, the hunter shall attach to the carcass a hand-made tag that contains the following information:
 - (a) The confirmation number;
 - (b) The hunter's name; and
 - (c) The hunter's telephone number.
- (5) A person shall not provide false information while:
 - (a) Completing the hunter's log;
 - (b) Checking a deer; or
 - (c) Creating a carcass tag.

Section 11. Transporting and Processing Deer. (1) A person shall:

- (a) Not transport an unchecked deer out of Kentucky;
- (b) Have proof that a deer or parts of deer brought into Kentucky were legally taken;
- (c) Not sell deer hides except to a licensed:
 1. Fur buyer;
 2. Fur processor; or
 3. Taxidermist.
- (2) A taxidermist or an individual who commercially butchers deer shall not accept a deer carcass or any part of a deer without a valid disposal permit issued by the department pursuant to KRS 150.411(3) or a proper carcass tag as established in Section 10 of this administrative regulation.
- (3) An individual who commercially butchers deer shall keep accurate records of the hunter's name, address, confirmation number, and date received for each deer in possession and retain the records for a period of one (1) year. (21 Ky.R. 2569; eff. 5-10-1995; Am. 22 Ky.R. 1874; eff. 6-6-1996; 23 Ky.R. 3870; eff. 7-9-1997; 24 Ky.R. 2741; 25 Ky.R. 300; eff. 8-17-1998; 2653; eff. 7-14-1999; 27 Ky.R. 203; 746; eff. 8-24-2000; 3142; eff. 7-16-2001; 28 Ky.R. 2415; eff. 7-15-2002; 29 Ky.R. 2520; 2872; eff. 6-16-2003; 30 Ky.R. 983; 2559; eff. 1-5-2004; 31 Ky.R. 344; eff. 8-26-2004; 1708; 1985; 32 Ky.R. 56; eff. 7-13-2005; 1470; 1883; eff. 5-5-2006; 33 Ky.R. 3444; eff. 8-6-2007; 34 Ky.R. 2439; 35 Ky.R. 26; eff. 7-9-2008; 2351; 2671; eff. 7-6-2009; 36 Ky.R. 2080-A; 2316; eff. 6-3-2010; 37 Ky.R. 2467, eff. 6-2-2011; 38 Ky.R. 1475; 1725; eff. 5-4-2012; 40 Ky.R. 1878; 2289; eff. 5-2-2014; 41 Ky.R. 1873; 2092; eff. 6-5-2015; 42 Ky.R. 2449; eff. 5-6-2016; 43 Ky.R. 1442, 1731; eff. 5-5-2017.)